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INAUGURAL ADDRESS

DELIVERED TO THE

UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW

NOVEMBER 19, 1873

BY THE

RIGHT HON. BENJAMIN DISRAELI, M.P.

LORD RECTOR OF THE UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW

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SECOND EDITION

INCLUDING THE

OCCASIONAL SPEECHES AT GLASGOW

AUTHORISED EDITION, CORRECTED BY THE AUTHOR

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PREFACE.

THE PUBLISHERS having informed me that there is a demand for the occasional Speeches made by me during the recent visit to Glasgow, I avail myself of the second edition of the 'Inaugural Address' to comply with their wish that they should be added to it. D.

HUGHENDEN :
December 4, 1873.

INAUGURAL ADDRESS DELIVERED AT THE COLLEGE OF GLASGOW, NOVEMBER 19, 1873.

MR. PRINCIPAL, PROFESSORS, AND STUDENTS—

My first duty, and my deepest gratification, is to thank you for the honour which you conferred on me two years ago. It is a high one. No one can be insensible to sympathy from the unknown, but the pleasure is necessarily heightened when it is offered by the educated and refined; when that body is representative, and, above all, when it represents the youth of a famous country.

My next duty, and one of which the fulfilment is scarcely less gratifying, is to avail myself of the privilege attendant on the office to which you have raised me, and to offer you some observations either on the course of your studies or the conduct of your lives, which, if made by me, will be made without pretence or presumption, quite satisfied if, when we are separated, any chance remark of mine may recur to your

memory, and lead you to not altogether unprofitable meditation.

Were I to follow my own bent, I would dwell on those delightful studies which occupy a considerable portion of your time within your academic halls, studies which, while they form your taste and strengthen your intelligence, will prove to you in future years both a guide and a consolation; but when I recollect the illustrious roll of those who have preceded me in this office, and remember how fully and how recently many of them have devoted their genius and their learning to such an enterprise, I am inclined to think that the field, though in my opinion inexhaustible, has been for the present sufficiently cultivated, and that as you are about to enter life at a period which promises, or rather which threatens, to be momentous, it would not be inappropriate were I to make some observations which may tend to assist you in your awaiting trials.

He who would succeed in life, and obtain that position to which his character and capacity entitle him, has need of two kinds of knowledge. It would seem at the first blush that self-knowledge were not very difficult of attainment. If there be any subject on which a person can arrive at accurate conclusions, it should be his own disposition and his own talents. But it is not so. The period of youth in this respect is one of great doubt and difficulty. It is a period

alike of false confidence and unreasonable distrust, of perplexity, of despondency, and sometimes of despair. It has been said by an eminent physician that there are very few persons of either sex who have attained their eighteenth year who have not contemplated withdrawing from the world—withdrawing from that world which, in fact, they have never entered. Doubtless, this morbid feeling is occasioned in a great degree by a dread of the unknown, but it is also much to be attributed to, and it certainly is heightened by, an ignorance of themselves.

How, then, is this self-knowledge to be acquired, and where are we to obtain assistance in this quest? From the family circle? Its incompetency in this respect is a proverb. Perception of character is always a rare gift, but around the domestic hearth it is almost unknown. Every one is acquainted with the erroneous estimates of their offspring which have been made even by illustrious parents. The silent, but perhaps pensive, boy is looked upon as a dullard, while the flippancy of youth in a commonplace character is interpreted into a dangerous vivacity which may in time astonish, perhaps even alarm, the world. A better criterion should be found in the judgment of contemporaries who are our equals. But the generous ardour of youth is not favourable to critical discrimination. Its sympathy is quick, it admires and applauds; but it lavishes its

applause and admiration on qualities which are often not intrinsically important, and it always exaggerates. And thus it is that the hero of school and of college often disappoints expectation in after life. The truth is, he has shown no deficiency in the qualities which obtained him his early repute, but he has been wanting in the capacity adapted to subsequent opportunities.

Some are of opinion that the surest judge of youthful character must be the tutor. And there is a passage in Isocrates on this head not without interest. He was an accomplished instructor, and he tells us he always studied to discover the bent of those who attended his lectures. So, after due observation, he would say to one, 'You are intended for action, and the camp is the life which will become you;' to another 'You should cultivate poetry;' a third was adapted to the passionate exercitations of the Pnyx; while a fourth was clearly destined for the groves and porticoes of philosophy. The early Jesuits, who were masters of education, were accustomed to keep secret registers of their observations on their pupils, and generations afterwards, when these records were examined, it is said the happy prescience of their remarks was strikingly proved by the subsequent success of many who had attained fame in arts and arms. But the Jesuits, gentlemen, whatever they may be now, were then very clever men; and I must confess that I am

doubtful whether the judgment of tutors in general would be as infallible as that of Isocrates.

In the first place, a just perception of character is always a rare gift. When possessed in a high degree it is the quality which specially indicates the leader of men. It is that which enables a General or a Minister to select the fit instrument for the public purpose; without which all the preparations for a campaign, however costly and complete, may be fruitless, and all the deliberations of councils and all the discussions of Parliament prove mere dust and wind. Scholars and philosophers are in general too much absorbed by their own peculiar studies or pursuits to be skilled in the discrimination of character, and if the aptitude of a pupil is recognised by them, it is generally when he has evinced a disposition to excel in some branch of acquirement which has established their own celebrity.

No, gentlemen, I believe, after all, it will be found that it is best and inevitable, in the pursuit of self-knowledge, that we should depend on self-communion. Unquestionably, where there is a strong predisposition, it will assert itself in spite of all obstacles, but even here only after an initiation of many errors and much self-deception. One of the fruitful sources of that self-deception is to be found in the susceptibility of the youthful mind. The sympathy is so quick that we are apt to transfer to our own persons the qualities which we admire in others. If it be the age of a great poet,

his numbers are for ever resounding in our ears, and we sigh for his laurels; if a military age, nothing will content us but to be at the head of armies; if an age of oratory and politics, our spirit requires that we should be leaders of parties and Ministers of State. In some instances the predisposition may be true, but it is in the nature of things that the instances must be rare. In ninety-nine cases out of one hundred the feeling is not idiosyncratic but mimetic, and we have mistaken a quick sensibility for creative power. Then comes to a young man the period of disappointment and despondency. To publish poems which no one will read; to make speeches to which no one will listen; after reveries of leading armies and directing councils, to find yourself, on your entrance into the business of life, incapable of influencing the conduct of an ordinary individual,—all this is bitter; but all depends upon how the lesson is received. A weak spirit will not survive this catastrophe of his self-love. He will sink into chronic despondency, and, without attempting to rally, he will pass through life as a phantom, and be remembered, as an old man, only by the golden promise of his deceptive youth. But a man of sense will accept these consequences, however apparently mortifying, with courage and candour. He will dive into his own intelligence, he will analyse the circumstances of his failure, he will discriminate how much was occasioned by indigenous deficiencies, and how much may be attributed to external and

fortuitous circumstances. And in this severe introspection he may obtain that self-knowledge he requires; his failures may be the foundation of his ultimate success, and in this moral and intellectual struggle he may discover the true range of his powers, and the right bent of his character and capacity.

So much, gentlemen, for self-knowledge, a subject that for ages has furnished philosophers with treatises. I do not pretend to be a philosopher, and I have not offered you a treatise, but I have made some remarks which are, at least, the result of my own observation.

But assuming that you have at length attained this indispensable self-knowledge, and that you have an opportunity, in the pursuits of life, of following the bent of your disposition, we come now to the second and not less important condition of success in life: have you that other kind of knowledge which is required?—do you comprehend the spirit of the age in which your faculties are to be exercised? Hitherto you have been as explorers in a mountain district. You have surveyed and examined valleys, you have penetrated gorges, you have crossed many a ridge and range, till at length, having overcome all obstacles, you have reached the crest of the commanding height, and, like the soldiers of Xenophon, you behold the sea. But the sea that you behold is the Ocean of Life! In what vessels are you going to embark? With what

instruments are you furnished? What is the port of your destination?

It is singular that though there is no lack of those who will explain the past, and certainly no want of those who will predict the future, when the present is concerned—the present that we see and feel—our opinions about it are in general bewildered and mistaken. And yet, without this acquaintance with the spirit of the age in which we live, whatever our culture and whatever our opportunities, it is probable that our lives may prove a blunder. When the young King of Macedon decided that the time had arrived when Europe should invade Asia, he recognised the spirit of his age. The revelations of the weakness of the Great King, which had been made during the immortal expedition of the Ten Thousand, and still more during the campaigns of Agesilaus, had gradually formed a public opinion which Alexander dared to represent. When Caius Julius perceived that the colossal empire formed by the Senate and populace of Rome could not be sustained on the municipal institutions of a single city, however illustrious, he understood the spirit of the age. Constantine understood the spirit of his age when he recognised the Sign under which he was resolved to conquer. I think that Luther recognised the spirit of the age when he nailed his Theses against Indulgences to the gates of a Thuringian church. The great Princes of the House of Tudor, and the statesmen they employed,

were all persons who understood the spirit of their age.

But it may be said, 'These are heroic instances. A perception of the spirit of their age may be necessary to the success of princes and statesmen, but is not needful, or equally needful, for those of lesser degree.' I think there would be fallacy in this criticism, and that the necessity of this knowledge pervades the whole business of life. Take, for example, the choice of a profession; a knowledge of the spirit of the age may save a young man from embracing a profession which the spirit of the age dooms to become obsolete. It is the same with the pursuits of commerce. This knowledge may guard a man from embarking his capital in a decaying trade, or from forming connexions and even establishments in countries from which the spirit of the age is gradually diverting all commercial transactions. I would say a knowledge of the spirit of the age is necessary for every public man, and in a country like ours, where the subject is called upon hourly to exercise rights and to fulfil duties which, in however small a degree, go to the aggregate of that general sentiment which ultimately governs States, every one is a public man, although he may not be a public character.

But it does not follow, because the spirit of the age is perceived and recognised, it should be embraced and followed, or even that success in life depends upon adopting it. What I wished to impress upon you was

that success in life depended on comprehending it. The spirit of the age may be an unsound and injurious spirit; it may be the moral duty of a man, not only not to defer to, but to resist it, and if it be unsound and injurious, in so doing he will not only fulfil his duty, but he may accomplish his success in life. The spirit of the age, for instance, was in favour of the Crusades. They occasioned a horrible havoc of human life; they devastated Asia and exhausted Europe; and, in all probability, in acting in this instance according to the spirit of the age, a man would have forfeited his life, and certainly wasted his estate, with no further satisfaction than having massacred some Jews and slain some Saracens.

What then, gentlemen, is the spirit of the age in which we ourselves live; of that world which in a few years, more or less, you will have all entered; where you are to establish yourselves in life; where you have to encounter in that object every conceivable difficulty; perplexities of judgment, material obstacles, tests of all your qualities, and searching trials of your character; and all these circumstances more or less affected by the spirit of the age, an acquaintance with which will assist you in forming your decisions and in guiding your course?

It appears to me that I should not greatly err were I to describe the spirit of this age as the spirit of equality; but 'equality' is a word of wide import,

under which various schools of thought may assemble and yet arrive at different and even contradictory conclusions. I hold that Civil equality—that is, equality of all subjects before the law, and that a law which recognises the personal rights of all subjects—is the only foundation of a perfect commonwealth—one which secures to all liberty, order, and justice. The principle of Civil equality has long prevailed in this kingdom. It has been applied during the last half-century more finely and completely to the constantly and largely varying circumstances of the country; but it had prevailed more or less in Britain for centuries, and I attribute the patriotism of our population mainly to this circumstance, and I believe that it has had more to do with the security of the soil than those geographical attributes usually enlarged upon.

Another land, long our foe, but now our rival only in the arts of peace, thought fit, at the end of the last century, to reconstruct its social system, and to rebuild it on the principle of Social equality. To effect this object it was prepared to make, and it made, great sacrifices. It subverted all the institutions of the country: a Monarchy of 800 years whose traditionary and systematic policy had created the kingdom; a National Church—for, though Romanist, it had secured its liberties; a tenure of land which maintained a valiant nobility, that never can be restored; it confiscated all endowments, and abolished all corporations;

erased from the map of the soil all the ancient divisions, and changed the landmarks and very name of the country. Indeed, it entirely effected its purpose, which was to destroy all the existing social elements and level the past to the dust. This experiment has had fair play, and you can judge of its results by the experience of eighty years.

It is not in Scotland that the name of France will ever be mentioned without affection, and I will not yield to any Scotchman in my appreciation of the brilliant qualities and the resplendent achievements of its gifted people. We are not blind to their errors, but their calamities are greater than their errors, and their merits are greater than their calamities. When I heard that their bright city was beleaguered, and that the breach was in the wall, I confess I felt that pang which I remember, as a child, I always experienced when I read of Lysander entering the City of the Violet Crown. But, gentlemen, I may on this occasion be permitted to say that of all the many services which France has rendered to Europe—Europe, that land of ancient creeds and ancient Governments, and manners and customs older than both—not the least precious is the proof she has afforded to us that the principle of Social equality is not one on which a nation can safely rely in the hour of trial and in the day of danger. Then it is found that there is no one to lead and nothing to rally round. There is not a man in the country who can

assemble fifty people. And rightly: since for an individual to direct is an usurpation of the sovereignty of the many. Those who ought to lead feel isolated, and those who wish to obey know not to whom to proffer their devotion. All personal influences are dead. All depends on the Central Government, a sufficient power in fair weather, but in stormy times generally that part of the machine which first breaks.

Civil equality prevails in Britain, and Social equality prevails in France. The essence of civil equality is to abolish privilege; the essence of social equality is to destroy classes. If the principle of equality at the present day assumed only these two forms, I do not think there would be much to perplex you in your choice, or in your judgment as to their respective results. But that is not so. The equality which is now sought by vast multitudes of men in many countries, which is enforced by writers not deficient in logic, in eloquence, and even learning, scarcely deigns to recognise civil equality, and treats social equality only as an obsolete truth. No moral or metaphysical elements will satisfy them. They demand physical and material equality. This is the disturbing spirit which is now rising like a moaning wind in Europe, and which, when you enter the world, may possibly be a raging storm. It may, therefore, be as well that your attention should be called to its nature, and that you may be led to consider its consequences.

The leading principle of this new school is that there is no happiness which is not material, and that every living being has a right to a share in that physical welfare. The first obstacle to their purpose is found in the rights of private property. Therefore, they must be abolished. But the social system must be established on some principle; and, therefore, for the rights of property they would substitute the rights of labour. Now, the rights of labour cannot be fully enjoyed if there be any limit to employment. The great limit to employment, to the rights of labour, and to the physical and material equality of man, is found in the division of the world into states and nations. Thus, as civil equality would abolish privilege, social equality would destroy classes; so material and physical equality strikes at the principle of patriotism, and is prepared to abrogate countries.

Now I am addressing a race of men who are proud, and justly proud, of their country. I know not that the sentiment of patriotism beats in any breast more strongly than in that of a Scotchman. Neither time nor distance, I believe, enfeebles that passion. It is as vehement on the banks of the Ganges as on the banks of the Clyde, and in the speculative turmoil of Melbourne as in the bustling energy of Glasgow. Why is a Scotchman proud of his country? Because the remembrance of it awakes a tradition of heroic exploits

and inspiring emotions; of sacrifices for its sake in the field and on the scaffold; of high examples of military skill and civil prudence; of literary and scientific fame; of commanding eloquence and profound philosophy, and of fascinating poesy and romance; all of which a Scotchman feels ennoble his existence, and all of which he is conscious have inevitably sprung from the circumstances of his native land. So that the very configuration of the soil and the temper of the clime have influenced his private virtues and his public life, as they unquestionably have given a form and colour to those works of creative genius which have gained the sympathy and admiration of the world.

No, gentlemen, it is not true that the only real happiness is physical happiness; it is not true that physical happiness is the highest happiness; it is not true that physical happiness is a principle on which you can build up a flourishing and enduring commonwealth. A civilised community must rest on a large realised capital of thought and sentiment; there must be a reserved fund of public morality to draw upon in the exigencies of national life. Society has a soul as well as a body. The traditions of a nation are part of its existence. Its valour and its discipline, its religious faith, its venerable laws, its science and erudition, its poetry, its art, its eloquence and its scholarship, are as much portions of its life as its agriculture, its commerce, and its engineering skill. Nay, I would go further, I would

say that without these qualities material excellence cannot be attained.

But, gentlemen, the new philosophy strikes further than at the existence of patriotism. It strikes at the home; it strikes at the individuality of man. It would reduce civilised society to human flocks and herds. That it may produce in your time much disturbance, possibly much destruction, I pretend not to deny; but I must express my conviction that it will not ultimately triumph. I hold that the main obstacles to its establishment are to be found in human nature itself. They are both physical and moral. If it be true, as I believe, that an aristocracy distinguished merely by wealth must perish from satiety, so I hold it is equally true that a people who recognise no higher aim than physical enjoyment must become selfish and enervated. Under such circumstances the supremacy of race, which is the key of history, will assert itself. Some human progeny, distinguished by their bodily vigour or their masculine intelligence, or by both qualities, will assert their superiority, and conquer a world which deserves to be enslaved. It will then be found that our boasted progress has only been an advancement in a circle, and that our new philosophy has brought us back to that old serfdom which it has taken ages to extirpate.

But the still more powerful—indeed, I hold the insurmountable—obstacle to the establishment of the new opinions will be furnished by the essential elements of

the human mind. Our idiosyncracy is not bounded by the planet which we inhabit. We can investigate space and we can comprehend eternity. No considerations limited to this sphere have hitherto furnished the excitement which man requires, or the sanctions for his conduct which his nature imperatively demands. The spiritual nature of man is stronger than Codes or Constitutions. No Government can endure which does not recognise that for its foundation, and no legislation last which does not flow from this fountain. The principle may develope itself in manifold forms—shape of many Creeds and many Churches; but the principle is divine. As time is divided into day and night, so religion rests upon the providence of God and the responsibility of man. One is manifest, the other mysterious; but both are facts. Nor is there, as some would teach you, anything in these convictions which tends to contract our intelligence or our sympathies. On the contrary, religion invigorates the intellect and expands the heart. He who has a due sense of his relations to God is best qualified to fulfil his duties to man. A fine writer of antiquity—perhaps the finest—has recorded in a beautiful passage his belief in Divine Providence, and in the necessity of universal toleration:—

'Ἐγὼ μὲν οὖν, καὶ ταῦτα, καὶ τὰ πάντ' ἀεὶ,
Φάσκοιμ' ἂν ἀνθρώποισι μηχαι ἓν θεούς·
Ὅτῳ δὲ μὴ τάδ' ἐστὶν ἐν γνώμῃ φίλα,
Κεῖνός τ' ἐκεῖνα στοργέτω, κἀγὼ τάδε.'

These lines were written, more than two thousand years ago, by the most Attic of Athenian poets. In the perplexities of life I have sometimes found in them a solace and a satisfaction; and I now deliver them to you, to guide your consciences and to guard your lives.

SPEECH AT THE BANQUET GIVEN BY THE CITY OF GLASGOW TO THE LORD RECTOR ON THE SAME DAY.

MR. DISRAELI, who on rising to return thanks was loudly cheered, said—

MY LORD PROVOST AND GENTLEMEN,—I must thank you most cordially for the kind manner in which you have received the toast which his Lordship has just proposed, and for the courteous and munificent hospitality you have extended to me, without any reference to political opinion, as the Lord Provost has very properly intimated.

I have always thought it to be one of the happiest circumstances of public life in England that we have not permitted our political opinions to interfere with our social enjoyments. I believe it is a characteristic of the country; at least, I am not aware that it is shared by any other. For instance, if you are on the Continent and wish to pay your respects to

a Minister and go to his Reception, you are invited by the Minister. The consequence is you find no one there except those who follow him. It is not so in England. I remember some years ago meeting under the charming roof of one of the most accomplished women of the time the most celebrated diplomatist of certainly this half century, and he said to me, 'What a wonderful system of society you have in England! I have not been on speaking terms with Lord Palmerston for three weeks, and yet here I am; but you see I am paying a visit to Lady Palmerston.'

It is unnecessary to dwell now on what may be the causes that produce this happy state of society in this country, which is essentially a political country, and therefore the circumstance is more to be valued. At the same time there is no doubt that by mixing together with this freedom both parties become acquainted with some political traits with which they might not otherwise be conversant. I did not know until to-night, for example, when we have heard it from a great authority, that it was a leading principle of the Liberal party not to give their opponents credit either for talents or patriotism. I may have heard it before, but I thought it must be the assertion of some malignant Tory. What I wish to say for the Conservative party is that it is not the principle which we adopt. We all give our opponents credit for the greatest abilities and the best intentions, although we may intimate our

occasional regret that those abilities are misapplied, and that, whatever may be their good intentions, they meet that destiny which is proverbially provided for that kind of article.

Gentlemen, I thank you for the kindness with which you have received the intimation of the Lord Provost with regard to my own political career. I would not trouble you with touching on it further, but after the allusion which has been made perhaps you will permit me to say that it has been my fortune to be the leader in the House of Commons of one of the great parties of the State for twenty-five years, and that there is no record, I believe, in the Parliamentary history of the country of the duration of a leadership equal to it. There have been in my time two illustrious instances of the great parties being led by most eminent men; one was the instance of Sir Robert Peel, who led the Tory party for eighteen years, though unfortunately it twice broke asunder; there was also the instance of one who is still spared to us, and who, I hope, will be long spared to us, for he is the pride of this country as he was the honour of the House of Commoms—Lord John Russell. He led one of the great parties seventeen years, though at last it slipped out of his hands.

Do not suppose I make these observations in any vain spirit. The reason why I have been able to lead any party for such a period, and under circumstances of

some difficulty and discouragement, is that the party with which I am connected is really the most generous and the most indulgent party that ever existed. I cannot help smiling sometimes when I hear of those convenient intimations given by those, who know all the secrets of the political world, of the extreme anxiety of the Conservative party to get rid of my services. The fact is, the Conservative party can get rid of my services whenever they give me any intimation that such is their desire. All I can say is, whenever I have desired to relieve them of it, they have only too kindly insisted on my retaining the lead, and the only difference to me has been that they were more indulgent and more kind. I will not trespass on the rule of the evening by making any further political allusion, but I hope you will allow me to think that I was justified in making these remarks.

Unfortunately the Lord Provost has touched on a subject, with great kindness and even minuteness, which is one I cannot even allude to. I think that an author who speaks about his own books is almost as bad as a mother who talks about her own children. You know what happens under those circumstances. Everybody present soon gets wrapt in abstraction—one looks at the ceiling, another at the fire, one sighs, and another, perhaps, yawns. That is the general result of the introduction of such a topic, and I have always thought that a literary man

who talks of his own writings must be put in the same category of boredom as the mother who dilates on the qualities of her darlings. Allow me now to express my surprise and delight that a rhapsody in 'Vivian Grey,' written nearly fifty years ago, has received the high honour, in one of the greatest cities of the kingdom, of being introduced to your indulgence. Gentlemen, on this subject I will merely say that, whatever the merits or demerits of my works, they were at least the result of my own feelings and my own observation.

Gentlemen, it is my fate, unfortunately, to pay a visit to one of the greatest commercial communities, I may say of the world, at a time when the commercial world is a little agitated. I have always found in my own experience that when the Bank rate of interest was at a minimum of 9 per cent., or something of that kind, my correspondence with Glasgow immensely increased. Therefore, I will make one or two remarks on that subject, because I must say that I cannot myself give my adhesion to the alarm which some feel at what some think a collapse in our commercial prosperity. I cannot myself see any signs of such declension; and I would rather attribute the somewhat startling results which have been recently witnessed to other causes.

I do not observe myself that there are any symptoms in Britain of reckless speculation, or any circumstances

which can justify the alarm which has lately prevailed and the inconveniences which no doubt have been very generally felt. I see that there is no reduction in the returns of the railways or the wages of those connected with them, and I have always found that a very good sign as to the national prosperity and the general state of trade. I do not find that there are any dangerous commitments to foreign loans, which are generally so abundant, but less at this moment than usual, nor do I see any evidence of reckless speculation of any kind.

No doubt our young relations on the other side of the Atlantic—with that ardour which is characteristic of youth—have been doing some things somewhat improvident; no doubt they have commenced many undertakings without any capital whatever. We may perhaps attribute this outburst of speculation to the unexpected receipt of the 'Alabama' money. I have known young people, when they came into a fortune unexpectedly, playing rigs of that kind, and quite astonished at what it ends in. But the commercial system of this country is now so vast and various that, with the greatest respect for our Transatlantic cousins—and no one has a greater respect and regard for them than myself—I do not believe that the disorders which have arisen there could have occasioned, or were adequate to occasion, the disorders that have occurred in our own country with reference to the

value of money. I attribute them to quite another cause, and if I touch on that cause, which I shall very briefly, I do it because I think the cause is not exhausted, and is deserving the grave attention of men who are so deeply interested in the prosperity of the country and the action of commerce as those I have the pleasure of meeting to-day.

I attribute the great monetary disturbance that has occurred, and is now to a certain degree acting very injuriously to trade—I attribute it to the great changes which the Governments in Europe are making with reference to their standard of value. You, of course, are perfectly acquainted with all these circumstances to which I allude. I attribute the present state of affairs very much to a Commission that was sitting in Paris at the time of the great Exhibition. That was a Commission the object of which was to establish a uniform coinage throughout the world—a beautiful idea of cosmopolitan philanthropy, which probably if it could be fulfilled would do no great harm; though I think it would be difficult to attain. The Commission of Paris never came to a definite recommendation on this subject, but they did on another subject, and that was that no time should be lost by any of the States of Europe in taking steps to establish a uniform gold standard of value. This, I know myself, arose from an opinion extremely prevalent among the statesmen of Europe and among distinguished economists

and merchants abroad, that the commercial prosperity and preponderance of England were to be attributed to her gold standard. Now, our gold standard is, I think, an invaluable arrangement. I think that any country which has a gold standard of value should, to use a celebrated expression, think once, twice, and thrice before it gives it up. But it is the greatest delusion in the world to attribute the commercial preponderance and prosperity of England to our having a gold standard. Our gold standard is not the cause of our commercial prosperity, but the consequence of our commercial prosperity; and it is very well for us to have it: but you cannot establish a gold standard by violent means. It must arise gradually from the large transactions of the country, and the consequent command it may have over the precious metals. When the various States of Europe suddenly determined to have a gold standard, and took steps to carry it into effect, it was quite evident we must prepare ourselves for convulsions in the money-market, not occasioned by speculation or any old cause, which has been alleged, but by a new cause with which we are not yet sufficiently acquainted, and the consequences of which are very embarrassing; and that is the reason I have taken the opportunity of calling your attention to it.

Take the case of Germany. At this moment it is most remarkable, when there has been such a want of a

gold standard in various parts of Europe, and even in England, where the strain has been so great, Germany has at this moment fifty millions sterling of gold coin virtually locked up; and it is locked up because it is the object of Germany to substitute a gold coinage for a silver coinage. While it has fifty millions value in gold coinage locked up, it has eighty or ninety millions of silver circulating, and they know very well, if they were to attempt to substitute violently the gold for the silver coinage—fifty millions of gold against ninety millions of silver—the consequence would be that the silver, already reduced in value, would become reduced still more, and the fifty millions of gold would all leave Germany. The consequence is that Germany is taking violent steps to get rid of this silver. The other day Germany sent a large amount of silver to Calcutta, and Germany could only by artificial means transmit it. The result was for a considerable time you could not buy a single bill on England. These are all circumstances calculated to disturb the course of commerce and manufacturing arrangements.

Then, again, take the case of France and America, which are floating on inconvertible paper; but France has also at this moment ninety millions sterling in silver coin. What must be the position of France with all her silver already depreciated, if Germany, to establish a gold standard, forces her own silver into France? France would be in a position of much embarrassment,

and would make violent efforts to establish as soon as she can a gold coinage at any cost. Vast disturbance and fluctuations must arise from such circumstances. I regret to treat matters of this kind at a moment like this, because they require to be treated with more precision of language and with greater patience than either I or you can afford at this moment, but it did appear to me a subject to which I ought to call your attention.

You are commercial men, interested in the monetary system of the world; you ought to have your eye carefully upon the efforts which are making to establish a gold standard of value in Germany, in France, and, soon you will find, also in America. Legally, of course, there is a gold standard in America, but virtually there is not. Holland and all the Scandinavian States have also established a gold standard, probably to protect themselves from a depreciated currency; and when countries inundated with silver are trying to get rid of it, convulsions must come, and no one would be able to form an adequate idea of the monetary arrangements of the times in which he lives if he omits from his consideration the circumstances to which I have called your attention. I have drawn your attention to it to-day because you must know it is very difficult for me to address you under the conditions in which we meet. Munificent as is your hospitality, and

cordial as may be your reception, it would scarcely do that our meeting to-day should be a mere interchange of compliments. To a certain degree that is very agreeable; one glass of liqueur is appropriate, but none of you would like to dine off a bottle of maraschino. A famous monarch, King Louis-Philippe, once said to me that he attributed the great success of the British nation in political life to their talking politics after dinner. Gentlemen, unfortunately to-day that is the only subject on which I may not enter, and therefore I hope that will be some excuse if I have touched on a question which is not a party question.

Let me, however, before I sit down, thank you, with my utmost heart, for the most cordial manner in which you have received me in your great city. I assure you the events of this day, both in the morning and evening, will not be easily erased from my memory. It is my first visit to your city. I think it is nearly half a century since I first visited Scotland. I remember it well, not only because I saw for the first time a memorable country, but because I made the personal acquaintance and became the guest of one of the best and greatest of men, the Lord of Abbotsford. He was a friend of my father, and he received me with that kindness which the illustrious do not, unfortunately, always bestow on the young. I remember walking with him in those new plantations of which he

was so proud, by the banks of that River Tweed which he loved so well. He poured out all the treasures of his fancy and his memory, all the fire and music of his mind; he took as much pains to interest and entertain me as if, instead of being an unknown youth, I had been the Lord Rector of a famous University. That was the good nature of the man, which was as great as his genius.

How much has happened in those fifty years—a period more remarkable than any, I will venture to say, in the annals of mankind? I am not thinking of the rise and fall of empires, the change of dynasties, the establishment of governments. I am thinking of those revolutions of science, which have had much more effect than any political causes; which have changed the position and prospects of mankind more than all the conquests and all the codes, of all the Conquerors and all the Legislators that ever existed. In that time, gentlemen, you and your society have not been idle. You have raised your town to a position among the great cities of the world. Long may you retain that position; long may you retain that energy which has rendered your Clyde as famous as the Thames and the Seine; long may your factories be full of creative life; long may you appropriate the metallic treasures of your teeming soil; long may your docks and harbours receive and furnish navies. Under Divine Providence that prosperity

will remain if you retain your public spirit. That depends upon your patriotism and your self-respect, and those sentiments can never in the British isles assume a more legitimate and fairer form than when they take the shape of loyalty and freedom. Gentlemen, I drink to your healths—all.

SPEECH ON RECEIVING THE FREEDOM OF THE CITY OF GLASGOW, IN A GOLD BOX, NOV. 20, 1873, *IN THE CITY HALL.*

MR. DISRAELI, who was received with loud and prolonged cheering, said—

MY LORD PROVOST AND GENTLEMEN,—Notwithstanding the kind and considerate terms in which the Lord Provost has alluded to the public accidents of my life, whether political or literary, and notwithstanding the cordial manner in which you have received those observations, I cannot for a moment permit any feeling of personal vanity to misinterpret the cause why I have received to-day this distinguished honour, bestowed in a manner which I cannot forget. I feel that it is owing to my connection with the University of Glasgow. I feel that you, the citizens of Glasgow, have, wisely and well, taken the opportunity of expressing the entire sympathy which subsists between the city and the University, and that you could do it in no manner more agreeable to them at this moment, and

more convenient, than in honouring the individual whom they have so much honoured.

Gentlemen, I look upon that connection between the city and the University of Glasgow as a most valuable one, and which should be ever cherished. There is not any city connected with a University which has not become illustrious. The mutual influence of both institutions is most beneficial. On the one hand, it softens the habits of those who are devoted to the busy purposes of life; while the contiguity of the University to a great city like Glasgow infuses a knowledge of the world which those who are secluded in cloisters cannot command. I am happy to remember that this connection of affection between these two great institutions has always prevailed. I have read, at least certainly in works of the last century, that there existed in this city an example of a commercial and literary association, which may, perhaps, even now survive, which was illustrious from its members, and in which the merchants of Glasgow met names not second to any in the roll of British worthies. Adam Smith, known to the whole world as the highest authority on one of the highest of subjects, celebrated men of science, philosophers like the ingenious Reid and the illustrious Hutchinson, were members of that association, and exercised their influence upon the public mind and spirit of this community. Nor need

I remind you that the connection with the University has not been wanting in material advantage to this great city. The discoveries of philosophers in the University have influenced most advantageously the material fortunes of Glasgow. I need not allude to the inventions of Black and others which you have carried into practice, and which have given such an impetus to your industrial life, but I may perhaps be permitted to say, as Lord Rector of the University, that it would be most delightful to me if I could hear of some public acknowledgment on the part of some distinguished citizen of Glasgow on that subject, so that I might see the hall of our University raised with becoming splendour from the ground which is, unfortunately, now unoccupied.

I have observed that it is characteristic, a happy characteristic, of the age in which we live that men become their own executors, and I should be delighted to hear of some munificent endowment which would place our University in the position which it deserves. I feel confidence in appealing to the wealthy citizens of this opulent city, because it is, after all, in cities that enlightenment looks for its natural home; it is here, it is in great cities, especially those that have been intellectually influenced by the existence of Universities, that we find letters and arts and science flourish. The city, indeed, is the natural home

of civilization It is in cities that have been discovered those inventions which have given an impulse to the education of the human mind. Priests and princes may have devised hieroglyphics and cuneiform writing, but nobody will deny that the alphabet was invented by merchants and manufacturers. Therefore, gentlemen, I trust that my election to the great office to which I have been raised may not be any impediment to the natural flow of the dispositions of the citizens of Glasgow, and that during the period that I may exercise any influence over the conduct of the University it will not be recorded as one in which it made no advance in its material fortunes.

Now, my Lord Provost and gentlemen, let me offer you my thanks for the distinction which you have conferred on me to-day. There is nothing which animates public men more than the prospect that they may obtain the sympathy and respect of their fellow citizens It is acts like these and scenes like these that sustain men in the turmoil and struggle of public life. Here we meet that approbation which is the great meed of public efforts ; to live in the affections and afterwards in the memory of our fellow subjects is what every man looks to as the chief object of his career. I shall not forget the new position which I have occupied this day. I shall show at all times, not only that I am proud of the distinction

which you have conferred upon me, but that I am faithful to the duties which it entails, and if ever the rights and interests of the city of Glasgow are invaded or imperilled there will be at least, I assure you, one Burgess on whose efforts to maintain them you need not fail to rely.

REPLY TO THE ADDRESS OF THE SHORT TIME COMMITTEE OF SCOTCH OPERATIVES, NOV. 23, 1873.

MR. DISRAELI said—

GENTLEMEN,—I remember my support of the Ten Hours Bill as one of the most satisfactory incidents of my life, and therefore I need not say that I sympathize generally with your views. That measure was opposed by persons of great influence and by many parties in the State, and at one time it seemed impossible that it could have succeeded, because then neither of the two great parties avowedly upheld it. But as time advanced it was successful in its progress, and I am glad to say that those with whom I act generally in public life uniformly and unanimously upheld it; and they have been repaid for the great effort which they made—because it was not made without sacrifice—by the results. It has tended to the elevation of the working classes of this country. That elevation depends upon two causes. If their wages rise and

their hours of labour diminish they are placed in a most favourable position; and if they do not avail themselves of the position they only prove that they are unworthy of it.

With regard to the first point, involving financial considerations—I refer to wages—no legislation can interfere. The rate of wages must be left to those inexorable rules of political economy to which we must all bow. They depend on demand and supply; but when you come to the hours of labour you then enter into social considerations, and in these the Legislature can interfere, and, if we use discretion and wisdom, no doubt to the advantage of the country and the working classes.

With regard to the particular point brought before me, it is not for the first time. Two years ago, in the centre of British industry, the great county of Lancaster, the glory of England, I received many communications and many deputations on the subject. I said at that time that it was unnecessary for me to state that I was favourable to the general policy, but as regarded the details of their particular proposal I requested that I should have confidence placed in me by the working classes; that they would allow me to consider its details when brought before Parliament in the shape of a practical measure, and that I could not pledge myself beyond a general sympathy with their cause. Since that time I have

omitted no opportunity of making myself acquainted with the details of the subject brought before me to-day. I have communicated with great employers of labour. I have received from them much information, and I have made myself acquainted with their views, and all I can say now is that the result of my deliberations and of my researches is favourable to the views which you uphold; but I reserve to myself the right, for your interests as much as my own, to take care that whenever this subject is discussed I should be considered perfectly free.

I should be opposed to any change in which the general sympathies of the employers were not with the employed. I believe, myself, that with dispassionate discussion, and with those inquiries proceeding in an impartial spirit to which I have referred, the result would be that there would be very little difference of opinion between the working classes generally and their employers; but I should desire that in making any alterations of this kind there should be a general concurrence of sentiment. I only wish to make one reference to an observation made by one member of this deputation, that I should subserve the interests of the Conservative party by carrying out the views which you have expressed. That member of the deputation may rest assured that in upholding these views I am not guided by the

interests of any party. My views on this subject were formed long before I was in the responsible position I have the honour to hold as the leader of a party. My opinions have never changed. And it is to me a subject of gratification that the large majority of those with whom I act in public life have the same opinion on this subject as myself. But I could not for a moment consider this question with reference to the interest of a political party.

I believe it is for the welfare of the country that the working classes should rise, as I think they are rising, in social and political consideration. I have confidence in the working classes. I do not know any other order of men which is so interested in maintaining the glory and greatness of this country. I have long been of opinion that if that state of things is brought about which seems fast approaching, when, with the increased remuneration for their toil which they now possess, they have reasonable diminution of their labour, nobody will be placed in a more happy position than the intelligent and educated working classes of this country.

It is only by labour and constant employment that life really is endurable. It is delightful with constant occupation—without it, it is intolerable. Your life is a life of happiness so long as your labour is not so excessive that you cannot cultivate your intelligence, while you enjoy those recreations of existence which

the working classes to a great degree at present enjoy, and which fifty years ago they did not possess. In answer to your address to-day, I do not wish to pledge myself in any detail to what you request, but I am sure your own reflection will convince you from my past conduct that when the subject is brought before the Legislature, I shall take that course which I think best for the interests of the country and for your advantage.

SPEECH, IN THE CITY HALL, ON RECEIVING AN ADDRESS OF CONFIDENCE FROM THE CONSERVATIVE ASSOCIATION OF GLASGOW, NOVEMBER 22, 1873.

MR. DISRAELI, on rising to address the meeting, was received with the most enthusiastic cheers. He said—

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,—I am not using merely conventional language when I express to you the high honour that I feel in receiving this address from the Conservative Association of Glasgow. The gratification is increased by the chair being filled this day by one who was formerly a colleague of mine in Parliament, and whom, with others around me, I learnt to respect, and more than respect, for he gained the heart of the House of Commons while he sat there.

Gentlemen, I will not conceal from you, and, indeed, many and most of you know it, that when it was first suggested to me to receive this distinction, and to meet you here, after great reflection, I felt it my duty—though with pain—to refuse the honour

which was intended for me. I did so, because I thought that, upon the whole, as my visit to Glasgow was an academic and neutral visit, it would be better that nothing should occur that might in any way make an exception to that general sentiment of respect which it is my pride and pleasure to say I have received from all classes and all parties in this city. And I must take this opportunity, as it may be the last I shall have, without reference to any political opinions, of expressing to the citizens of Glasgow my lively sense of the kind and considerate manner in which they have received me, and I must say the too great indulgence even of those who do not generally agree with me in political opinion.

But, Gentlemen, when I had been here some little time it was represented to me by those who spoke for a large body of my fellow countrymen that it seemed very hard upon them who, from their pursuits and other reasons, could take no part in august academical functions, or in the splendour of civic banquets, that, feeling deeply as they did on political subjects, one whom, however unworthy he may be of their confidence, they still regard as their chief, should be resident for nearly a week in this great city, in communication, apparently, with all but his humbler friends, who perhaps looked on him with not less confidence and affection. And I confess to you that although it had been my original hope that not a word should have

fallen from these lips during my visit to Glasgow which should have been discordant to any individual in the city, I could not resist this appeal. It did appear to me to be so unfair, I would say so unkind and ungenerous, that I assented, after due consideration, to receive this address and meet you as we meet to-day, on terms which will permit me to make some observations to you on the present state of public affairs.

And I will here say, that there may be no misunderstanding with reference to some paragraphs I have seen in the public papers, that I never was asked and never assented to meet any separate body particularly styled 'Conservative Working Men.' I have never been myself at all favourable to a system which would induce Conservatives who are working men to form societies confined merely to their class. In the church and at the polling-booth all are equal. All that concerns Conservative working men and interests them concerns and interests the great body of Conservatives of whom they form a portion. Therefore, it is to the Conservative Association I see before me, of whom a very considerable majority consists of working men—it is to that Association that I address myself.

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,—I believe I may describe the position of this country as one of great prosperity. There is no doubt that during the

last three years that prosperity has been generally acknowledged. There are some who suppose that it may have now received a check. If it has received a check it will increase, I hope, our circumspection, but I must express my own opinion that no substantial diminution in the sources of the prosperity so apparent during the last three years has occurred. I think we may fairly say the state of this country is one of great prosperity, and although I believe and know that it is a prosperity for which we are not indebted either to Whigs or Tories, although I know that it has been occasioned in a considerable degree, under Providence, by fortuitous though felicitous circumstances, I am perfectly ready, speaking to-day, as I hope to speak, in the fairest terms on public affairs, which I believe to be quite consistent with the position of the leader of a party—I am ready to give to Her Majesty's Government credit for the prosperity we feel and acknowledge.

With regard to Her Majesty's Ministers themselves, I will be equally candid, equally fair—I will take them at their own estimate. They have lost few opportunities of informing the country that they are men distinguished for commanding talent, admirable eloquence and transcendent administrative abilities. I dispute none of these propositions any more than I do the prosperity of the country. They also tell us that the country being so prosperous, and they having all these personal

advantages, they have taken the opportunity during the last few years of passing measures of immense magnitude, only equalled by the benefit they have conferred upon the people.

Now, gentlemen, I will not question their own estimate of their ability, or even for a moment their own description of their achievements; but I ask this question,—What is the reason, when the country is so prosperous, when its affairs are administered by so gifted a Government, and when they have succeeded during five years in passing measures so vast and beneficent—what is the reason that Her Majesty's Ministers are going about regretting that they are so unpopular? Now, gentlemen, I beg you to observe that I did not say Her Majesty's Ministers are unpopular. It is they who say so. I stated their own case and their own position; I say that, under the circumstances I have put fairly before you, it is a remarkable circumstance, and the question must be inquired into—why persons in the position of Her Majesty's Government should on every occasion deplore the unpopularity they have incurred.

Now my opinion, gentlemen, is that that is not a question of mere curiosity—it is one that, as I think I shall show you, concerns the honour and the interests of the country. If the country is so prosperous—if Her Majesty's Ministers are so gifted—if they have had such an ample opportunity of show-

ing the talents which they possess—if they have done all this good—if they have availed themselves of this signal opportunity to effect such great results, then the only inference we can draw from the unpopularity which they themselves deplore is that the people of this country is a fickle and ungrateful people. Therefore it is not a question of mere curiosity. It is a question that ought to be answered.

If there be those who suppose that the people of this country, as I hold, is not a fickle or ungrateful people—that they are a people who may be mistaken—that may be misled, but that they are a people who, on the whole, are steadfast in their convictions, and especially in their political convictions, then this question, if left unanswered, as Her Majesty's Ministers have placed the circumstances before the country, is a slur on the character of the people of this kingdom. I say it ought to be answered; and a short time since—some two months ago—I answered it.

It appeared to me, at that moment especially, when Her Majesty's Government, by their ablest and most powerful representatives, were deploring their unpopularity, and asking the reason why, or rather intimating by inference that it was the fault of the people, not of the Government, that some one should give an answer to that question. I gave it, and in a very brief form—in the most condensed and the most severely accurate form. There is not an

expression in that description of the conduct of the Government which was not well weighed; there is not a word for which I had not warranty, and for which I could not adduce testimony ample and abounding. There was only one characteristic of that description which was not noticed at the time, and which I will now confess—it was not original, for six months before, in the House of Commons, I had used the same expressions and made the same statement—not in a hole or corner, but on the most memorable night of the Session, when there were six hundred members of the House of Commons present, when on the debate then taking place avowedly the fate of the Ministry depended.

It was at midnight that I rose to speak, and made the statement almost similar in expression, though perhaps stronger and more lengthened than the one which has become the cause of recent controversy. The Prime Minister followed me in that debate. The House of Commons knew what was depending upon the verdict about to be taken, and with all that knowledge they came to a division, and by a majority terminated the existence of the Government. Gentlemen, it surprises me, then, that having repeated that statement six months after, with the advantage of six months' more experience and observation, it should have so much offended Her Majesty's Government. The Ministers sighed and their newspapers screamed. The

question I have to ask, and in this your interests are vitally concerned—the question is, was the statement I made a true and accurate one?

You cannot answer statements of this kind by saying 'Oh, fie! how very rude.' You must at least adduce arguments in order to prove that the statement which you do not sanction is one that ought not to have been made. And therefore I ask you to-day, in the first place, is it or is it not true that the Irish Church has been despoiled? Is it or is it not true that the gentlemen of Ireland have been severely amerced? Is it or is it not true that a Royal Commission has been issued which has dealt with the ancient endowments of this country in so ruthless a manner that Parliament has frequently been called upon to interfere, and has addressed the Crown to arrest their propositions? Are these facts or are they not?

Well, I did then venture to say that the Ministers had 'harassed trades and worried professions,' as reasons why men naturally become unpopular. Was that true or was it not? Because, after all, everything depends on the facts of the statement. I will not enter into a long catalogue of trades, commencing with the important trade of which we have heard so much, and which has made itself felt at so many elections, down to the humblest trade—the lucifer match makers who fell upon their knees in Palace-yard. I sup-

pose there are some Scotch farmers present, or, at least, those who are intimately connected with them. I want to know whether their trade was harassed when a proposition was brought before the House of Commons to tax their carts and horses, and all the machinery of their cultivation? I know how the proposition was received in England, and I doubt not the Scotch farmers, like the English, felt extremely harassed by it. I want to know what is the reason why there is this crusade throughout the country against Schedule D of the Income Tax. The Income Tax has been borne for 30 years with great self-sacrifice, and endured with great loyalty by the people of this country. It is at this moment at the lowest pitch it ever reached; how is it, then, that it is at this moment more unpopular than it was at any time during the long period we endured it, and at a much higher figure? It is on account of the assessment of the trades of England under that schedule. It is the vexatious and severe assessment that has harassed all trades under that Act, who are not particularly pleased when, after paying five quarters of Income Tax in one year, they learn also that they are in arrears.

Then, have the professions been worried? Is it not true that at this moment a Royal Commission is examining in London into the grievances of six thousand officers? Ask the Naval profession whether they have

not been worried. During the course of the present Government the whole administrative system of the Admiralty, the Council that had always a wise and vast influence in the management of the Navy, and the peculiar and important office of the Secretary, were all swept away; and in spite, I may say, of the nightly warnings of a right hon. friend of mine now lost to us all and his country, the ablest Minister of the Admiralty during the present reign—notwithstanding his nightly warnings that they were so conducting the administration of the Navy that they would probably fall into some disaster. His remonstrances were in vain, and it was not till the most costly vessel of the State foundered, and the perilous voyage of the 'Megæra' had been made, that the country resolved to stand it no longer, they rescinded the whole of this worrying arrangement, and appointed a new First Lord to re-establish the old system. Is that worrying a profession, or is it not?

Well, gentlemen, I can speak of another profession—a profession not the least considerable in the State—the Civil Service profession. Has it been worried or is it now in a process of worrying, or is it not? There are many even in this room well acquainted with the Civil Service in all its departments. Let them decide. I might say the same of the legal profession, for I have heard the lawyers on both sides of the House in the debates of last Session agree in im-

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ploring the Government not to continue propositions which would infallibly weaken the administration of justice in this country. But with professions and trades it is not merely those directly attacked, but it is every one that is harassed and worried, because no one knows whose turn will come next.

Well, I did say to the House of Commons, and I afterwards expressed it in another form—I said the Ministers had attacked every class and institution, from the highest to the lowest in the country. Is that true or is it not? Is it not a fact that Her Majesty's Government on every occasion of which they could avail themselves during the last three years attacked the House of Lords—scoffed at the existence of its high functions, and even defied its decisions, until the result proved that the House of Lords was extremely popular in the country, and Her Majesty's Government were obliged themselves to confess that they were exceedingly unpopular. But you must also remember this,—that the same body of men who thus attacked the House of Lords also brought in a bill which attacked the poor inheritance of the widow and the orphan.

Now, I think I have shown that from the highest to the lowest the same system prevailed. What occurred in the interval? The Churches of England and Scotland have been threatened. It has been publicly stated by the highest authority in the House of Commons

that he did not believe that the present House of Commons would sanction the views of those who wished to pull down these venerable establishments, but he recommended them to agitate out of doors and endeavour to excite public opinion against them.

Then, again, I said jobs were perpetrated that outraged public opinion. Is that true, or is it not? Is it not the fact that two years ago public opinion was outraged by persons being appointed to important offices in Church and State in direct violation of the language of Acts of Parliament?—that a dispensing power in that respect was exercised by the Minister, that dispensing power which forfeited the crown of James II. Was not public indignation roused to the highest pitch upon the Collier appointment? Were these acts perpetrated or not, and did they outrage public opinion? Every one knows that public opinion was outraged.

I have said, also, that they stumbled into errors which were always discreditable and sometimes ruinous. That was called violent language. Gentlemen, I never use violent language. Violent language is generally weak language; but I hope my language is sometimes strong. Now, let us look at this statement. I said that they stumbled into errors which were always discreditable and sometimes ruinous? Was the Zanzibar contract an 'error,' and was it not 'discreditable?' Was the conduct of the Treasury

in allowing a subordinate officer to misappropriate nearly a million of the public money an 'error,' and was it not 'discreditable?' When the Government had referred the Alabama Claims to the arbitrament of a third State, was not the change of the Law of Nations by the Three Rules an 'error,' and was that not 'discreditable?' And besides being 'discreditable,' was it not ruinous?

Now, I have given an answer to the question why the Government, with transcendent abilities, as they tell us, with magnificent exploits which they are always extolling, and with a country whose prosperity is so palpable, are unpopular. I tell them why. They have harassed and worried the country, and there was no necessity for any of the acts they have committed. I have put it in condensed and, I am sure, accurate language. There was a celebrated writer, one of the greatest masters of our language, who wrote the history of the last four years of the reign of Queen Anne, which was the duration of an illustrious Ministry. I have written the history of a Ministry that has lasted five years, and I have immortalized the spirit of their policy in five lines.

And now, gentlemen, I will tell you what is the unfortunate cause of this political embarrassment. Why, with such favourable circumstances as the present Government have experienced; why with the great ability which

no man is more aware that they possess than myself; why, with the most anxious and earnest desire for which I give them entire credit to do their duty to their Sovereign and their fellow countrymen, the result has been so mortifying. I told it two years ago to the assembled county of Lancaster, when I met not only the greatest proprietors of its soil, but deputations and delegations of its choicest citizens from every town and city of that great county. I told them, speaking with the sense of the deepest responsibility, which I trust also animates me now—I told them that the cause was, that this Government, unfortunately, in its beginning had been founded on a principle of violence, and that fatal principle had necessarily vitiated their whole course.

And what have we gained by that principle of violence? Let us consider it, here even, with impartiality and perfect candour. I am now referring to the Irish policy of the Ministry. I say it is quite possible for public men, with the view of obtaining some great object advantageous to the country, to devise and pass measures which may utterly fail in accomplishing their purpose; and yet, however mortifying to themselves, however disappointing to the country, there would be no stain upon their reputation. We cannot command, but we must endeavour in public life to deserve, success. If, therefore, it is said that the Government proposed the large measures which they did with respect to Ireland in order to terminate the grievances

of years and the embarrassment to England—which the state of Ireland certainly was—although they may have failed, their position was one which still might be a position of respect. That they have failed in this instance no one can doubt. A great portion of Ireland at this moment is in a state of veiled rebellion.

But what I charge upon the Government is this, not that their measures have failed—for all measures may fail—not that their measures failed to prevent or to suppress this veiled rebellion in Ireland, but that the measures, which they brought forward to appease and settle, to tranquillize and consolidate Ireland, are the very cause that this veiled rebellion has occurred.

For, gentlemen, what was the principle upon which the whole of their policy with respect to Ireland was founded? What was the principle upon which they induced Parliament to confiscate and to despoil the Church and private property in Ireland? It was that Ireland must be governed on Irish principles—the administration of Ireland must be carried on with reference to Irish feeling. If that is a sound principle and a sound sentiment in politics, it is a perfect vindication of what is occurring in the city of Dublin at this moment—viz. an assembly of men whose avowed object is to dissever the connection between the two countries. If we are not to legislate for Ireland with reference to Imperial feelings and general and national interests—if we are only to legis-

late with reference to Irish feelings, it is perfectly evident that if a majority of the Irish people take any idea in the world into their heads, however ruinous to themselves, and however fatal to the Empire, that policy must be recognized by this country. It is, therefore, to the principle avowedly, ostentatiously, brought forward by the Ministry as the basis of their Irish policy that I trace the dangerous condition in which Ireland is placed. Well, then, I say this policy of violence, for which such sacrifices were made, for which institutions and interests which were at least faithful to Britain were sacrificed—this policy of violence has led only to a state of affairs, unfortunately, more unsatisfactory than that which prevailed before.

Now, gentlemen, I observe in the papers that the day is fixed for the re-assembling of Parliament. The time is not yet very near, but when you find Her Majesty has appointed the day for our re-assembling, it is an intimation that we must begin to consider the public business a little, and, therefore, it is not altogether inconvenient that we should be talking upon these matters to-day. Now, when we meet Parliament I apprehend the first business that will be brought before us will be the Ashantee war. Upon that subject my mouth is closed. I will not even make an observation upon the railway, which I believe has been returned to England. Whenever this

country is externally involved in a difficulty, whatever I may think of its cause or origin, those with whom I act, and myself, have no other duty to fulfil but to support the existing Government in extricating the country from its difficulties, and vindicating the honour and interests of Great Britain. The time will come, gentlemen, no doubt, when we shall know something of the secret history of that mysterious mess of the Ashantee war; but we have now but one duty to fulfil, which is to give every assistance to the Government in order that they may take those steps which the interests of the country require.

I should, indeed, myself, from my own individual experience, be most careful not to follow the example which one of the most distinguished members of the present Administration pursued with respect to us when we had to encounter the Abyssinian difficulty. Mr. Lowe thought proper to rise in Parliament when I introduced the necessity of interference in order to escape from difficulties which we had inherited and not made—Mr. Lowe rose in Parliament and violently attacked the Government of the day for the absurdity, the folly, the extreme imprudence of attempting any interference in the affairs of Abyssinia. He laughed at the honour of the country, he laughed at the interests of a few enslaved subjects of the Queen of England being compared, as he said, with the certain destruction and disaster which must attend any

interference on our part. He described the horrors of the country and the terrors of the clime. He said there was no possibility by which any success could be obtained, and the people of England must prepare themselves for a horrible catastrophe. He described not only the fatal influences of the climate, but I remember he described one pink fly alone, which he said would eat up the whole British army. He was as vituperative of the insects of Abyssinia as if they had been British workmen.

Now, gentlemen, there is a most interesting and important subject which concerns us all, and which it is not impossible may be submitted to the consideration of Parliament by Her Majesty's Ministers, because I observe a letter published in a newspaper, by the authority of the Prime Minister, which is certainly calculated to arrest public attention. That is a letter respecting the subject of Parliamentary Reform. Now, gentlemen, I think it is not undesirable that at a moment when letters of this kind are circulated, and when there is a good deal of loose talking prevalent in the country on the subject, that I should take this opportunity of calling your attention to some considerations on this subject which may occupy you after my visit to Glasgow has terminated, and may not be, I think, unprofitable. Her Majesty's Government are not pledged, but after the letter of the Prime Minister announcing his own opinion, and the

intention of the Government, probably, to consider the question, Her Majesty's Government may at this moment be considering the question of further Parliamentary Reform.

Now, there are two points which the Government ought to consider when they come to that question. The first is the expediency of having any further Parliamentary Reform. They will have to remember that very wise statesmen have been of opinion that there is no more dangerous and feebler characteristic of a State than perpetually to be dwelling on what is called organic change. The habit, it has been said in politics, of perpetually considering your political constitution can only be compared to that of the individual who is always considering the state of his health and his physical constitution. You know what occurs in such circumstances—he becomes infirm and valetudinarian. In fact, there is a school of politics which looks at the English Constitution as valetudinarian. They are always looking at its tongue and feeling its pulse, and devising means by which they may give it a tonic. The Government will have to consider that very important point, first of all, whether it is expedient. I am not giving any opinion upon it—being only a private member of Parliament that is quite unnecessary—but I am indicating that the consideration would occur to a responsible statesman. They will also have to

consider this important point, that whatever Minister embarks in a campaign of Parliamentary Reform must make up his mind that he will necessarily arrest the progress of all other public business in the country.

I will show you to what extent that consideration should prevail. Parliamentary Reform, as a new question, was introduced in the House of Commons in 1852 by Lord John Russell, and from 1852 to 1866 or the end of 1865 it was introduced annually; four Prime Ministers had pledged themselves to the expediency of Parliamentary Reform; the subject made no progress in Parliament, but took up a great deal of time; a great portion of the Parliamentary Sessions for these twelve or thirteen years was taken up by discussions on Parliamentary Reform; and the country got very ill-tempered, finding that no reform was ever advanced, and other and more important subjects were neglected. At last it was taken up by men determined to carry it: first by Lord Russell, who did not carry it, and afterwards by others; but observe, the whole of 1866, 1867, and 1868 were entirely absorbed by the subject of Parliamentary Reform. Therefore, you will observe that when important subjects in legislation are pressing, you must be prepared to discourage any further demand for Parliamentary Reform unless you feel an insuperable necessity for it, because if you want Parliamentary Reform you cannot have any of those large measures with regard to local taxation or other subjects in which

you are all so much interested. That is the first consideration for the Government of the present day to determine, whether they shall embark in the question of Parliamentary Reform. Is it necessary? Is the necessity of such a character that it outweighs the immense inconvenience of sacrificing all other public and progressive measures for the advancement of this particular measure?

Then there comes another subject of consideration. I dwell upon these matters because I apprehend that one of the reasons of our meeting this evening is that upon questions which are likely to engage the public attention so far as those whom you honour with your confidence can give you any guidance, it is as well that I should indicate to you briefly my general views of the situation. Now, the next point, therefore, that Government will have to consider, if they make up their minds to bring forward a measure of Parliamentary Reform is the character of the measure, and that will be a most anxious question for them to decide.

I think I may say without conceit that the subject of Parliamentary reform is one that I am entitled to speak upon at least with some degree of authority. I have given to it the consideration of some forty years, and am responsible for the most important measure on the subject that has been carried. I would say this, that it is impossible to go further in the direction of Parliamentary Reform than the Bill of

1867–68 without entirely subverting the whole of the borough representation of this country. I do not mean to say that if there was a place disfranchised to-morrow for corruption it would not be possible to enfranchise a very good place in its stead; but, speaking generally, you cannot go beyond the Act of 1867 without making up your mind entirely to break up the borough representation of this country. The people of Great Britain ought to be aware that that is the necessary consequence.

So far as I am concerned I never could view the matter in a party light. If I were to accustom myself to view it in a party light I might look with unconcern on this difficulty, for the smaller boroughs of the country are not, on the whole, favourable to our views. I am proud to think our party is supported by the great counties, and now to a great extent by great towns and cities; but I do not consider the small boroughs favourable to Conservative views. It is the national sympathies and wide sentiments of those who live in our great cities that are much more calculated to rally round the cause in which we are deeply concerned—the greatness and glory of our country. This ought to be known, that if you really intend to have a further measure of Parliamentary Reform, and have digested that large meal which you had a few years ago, there is no borough in England with under forty thousand inhabitants that would

have any claim to be represented even by one member. Now that is a very important consideration, if, as we are told, the small boroughs of between ten and thirty thousand inhabitants are the backbone of the Liberal party. They may be, and I think they are. But I should be very sorry to see them disfranchised. They are centres of public spirit and intelligence in the country, influencing much the districts in which they are situated, and affording a various representation of the mind and life of the country. But it is inevitable that should occur, and I think, therefore, it ought to be well understood by the country when you have persons, without the slightest consideration, saying they are prepared to vote for this, or who are all in favour of that, whereas they have not really mastered the question.

So far as I am concerned, any proposition to change the representation of the people brought forward by Her Majesty's Government will have my respectful and candid consideration. But I say at once that I will vote for no measure of that kind, or of that class that is brought forward by some irresponsible individual who wants, on the eve of a general election, to make a clap-trap career. I think it perfectly disgusting for individuals to jump up in the House of Commons, and without the slightest responsibility, official or moral, make propositions which demand the gravest consideration of prolonged and protracted

Cabinets, with all the responsibility attaching to experienced statesmen.

Now, gentlemen, although I have rather exceeded the time I had intended, there are one or two more remarks I should like to make on subjects which interest us all. And first, as the only feature in our domestic life that gives me uneasiness, are the relations at present between capital and labour, and between the employers and the employed—I must say one word upon that subject. If there are any relations in the world which should be those of sympathy and perfect confidence, they always appear to be the relations which should subsist between employers and employed, and especially in manufacturing life. They are, in fact, much more intimate and more necessary relations than those which subsist between landlords and tenants. It is an extremely painful thing that of late years we so frequently hear of misunderstandings between the employers and the employed—that they look upon each other with suspicion—with mutual suspicion—as if each were rapaciously inclined either to obtain or retain the greater share of the profits of their trade; those incidents with which you are all acquainted, of a very painful nature, being the consequence.

Now I am not talking of demands for an increase of wages when men are carrying on what is called a roaring trade—I believe that is the classical epithet. When a roaring trade is going on, I am not at

all surprised that working men should ask for an increase of wages. But the trade sometimes ceases to roar, when wages naturally, on the same principle, assume a form more adapted to the circumstances. But, no doubt, during the last twenty years there appears to have been, not a passing and temporary cause of disturbance, like the incidents of trade being very active or reduced, but some permanent cause disturbing prices, which alike confuses the employer in his calculations as to profits and embarrasses the employed from the greater expenditure which they find it necessary to make.

Now, I cannot but feel myself—having given to the subject some consideration—I cannot help feeling that the large and continuous increase of the precious metals, especially during the last twenty years, has certainly produced no inconsiderable effect on prices.

I will not on an occasion like this enter into anything like an abstruse discussion. I confine myself to giving my opinion and the results; and this moral, which I think is worthy of consideration. If it can be shown accurately and scientifically that there is a cause affecting a prominent class, reducing the average remuneration of the employed, and confusing and confounding the employer in his calculations as to profits —if that can be shown, and if it is proved to be the result of inexorable laws, far beyond the reach of legis-

latures, and of circumstances over which human beings have no control—I think if that could be shown, and employers and employed had sufficient acuteness and knowledge—and I am sure that in Scotland there is no lack of both—it would very much change those mutual feelings of suspicion and sentiments of a not pleasant character which occasionally prevail when they find that they are both of them the victims, as it were, of some inexorable law of public economy which cannot be resisted. I think, instead of supposing that each wanted to take advantage of the other they would feel inclined to put their shoulders to the wheel, accurately ascertain whether this be true, and come to some understanding which would very much mitigate the relations which subsist between them. I have little doubt the effect would be to increase the average rate of wages, with my views as to the effect of the continuous increase of the precious metals. But, at the same time, I have not the slightest doubt the employer would, in the nature of things, find adequate compensation for the new position in which he would find himself.

There is one point, before I sit down, to which I wish to call your attention. Because, if I am correct in saying that the question of the relations between the employer and employed is the only one that gives me anxiety at home, there is a subject abroad to which I think I ought, on an occasion like this, to draw your

notice; and that is the contest that is commencing in Europe between the spiritual and temporal power.

Gentlemen, I look upon it as very grave, as pregnant with circumstances which may greatly embarrass Europe. A religious sentiment is often and generally taken advantage of by political causes which use it as a pretext; and there is much going on in Europe at the present moment which, it appears to me, may occasion soon much anxiety in this community. I should myself look upon it as the greatest danger to civilization if in the struggle that is going on between faith and free thought, the respective sides should only be represented by the Papacy and the Red Republic. And here I must say that if we have before us the prospect of struggles—perhaps ultimately of wars and anarchy—caused by the struggle now rising in Europe, it will not easily be in the power of England entirely to stand apart. Our connection with Ireland will then be brought painfully to our consciousness, and I should not be at all surprised if the visor of Home Rule should fall off some day and you beheld a very different countenance.

Now, gentlemen, I think we ought to be prepared for these events. The position of England is one, which is indicated, if dangers arise, of holding a middle course upon these matters. It may be open to England again to take her stand upon the Reformation, which three hundred years ago was the source of her

greatness and her glory, and it may be her proud destiny to guard civilization alike from the withering blast of atheism and from the simoom of sacerdotal usurpation. These things may be far off, but we live in a rapid age, and my apprehension is that they are nearer than some suppose. If that struggle comes, we must look to Scotland to aid us. It was once, and I hope is still, a land of liberty, of patriotism, and of religion. I think the time has come when it really should leave off mumbling the dry bones of political economy and munching the remainder biscuit of an effete Liberalism. We all know that a General Election is at hand. I do not ask you to consider on such an occasion the fate of parties or of Ministers. But I ask you to consider this, that it is very probable that the future of Europe may depend greatly on the character of the next Parliament of England. I ask you, when the occasion comes, to act as becomes an ancient and famous nation, and give all your energies for the cause of faith and freedom.

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